



**Williamsport Area School District
Athletic Department
Resocialization of Sports Recommendations & Protocols**

This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The WASD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. The WASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

PROTOCOLS

Protocols for **ALL LEVELS** of Junior and Senior High Athletics

1. Prior to a student-athlete being allowed to participate in any Williamsport Area School District workout, the parents and students must sign a Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases, including COVID-19. (Appendix)
2. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The screenings will be a verbal/written questionnaire and a temperature check. Temperatures at 100.4 or higher will be sent home.
3. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible. (Face coverings are recommended to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.) Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
4. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities
5. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible

6. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols
7. Anyone who is sick must stay home
8. Plan in place if a student or employee gets sick
9. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
10. Athletes and Coaches MUST provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.
11. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
12. Identify Staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions.(See - CDC “People Who are at a Higher Risk for Severe Illness”)
13. Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORTS

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples: football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts), dance

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer

**** High/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Low risk category with non-contact modifications. Team Activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain social distancing.**

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Level 1 (PA State Red)

Team Activities: No In-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.), Athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Level 2 (PA State Yellow or Green - as permitted by PIAA)

Team Activities may include: team meetings, open gym, kick around, weight training/conditioning, running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, and sideline cheer, etc.

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check.(See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Responses to screening questions for each person will be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. A clearance may be required to return to play.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (25 Yellow - 250 Green) individuals per group including coaches per practice area.
- Controlled non-contact practices only, modified game rules
- Social Distancing should be applied during practices and in locker rooms, and gathering areas.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after an individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity:

- Lower risk sports practices may begin
- Modified practices may begin for Moderate and High risk sports (practices must remain non-contact and include social distancing where applicable, activity should focus on individual skill development)
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) should not be utilized

Level 3 (PA State Green - as permitted by PIAA)

Team activities may include: : basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football, etc.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider. A clearance may be required to return to play.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, Moderate, and High Risk practices and Low and Moderate Risk competitions may begin (As per State, Local, and PIAA Guidelines)
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but MUST be cleaned after every practice/event.

Level 4 (PA State Green - as permitted by PIAA)

Team Activities include: Low/Moderate Sports may resume. High Risk Sports (Football, Wrestling, and Cheerleading Stunting) may begin full person to person contact and competition.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider.

- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- All sports may resume normal practice and competition
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but MUST be cleaned after every practice/event.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation:

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary. This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State and Local governments.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which will be allowed at an event:

1. Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
 2. Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
 3. Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
 - Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by the local/state governments.

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- The WASD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.

POSITIVE CASES AND COACHES, STAFF, OR ATHLETES SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

SCREENING:

- The “Williamsport Team & Event Personal Screening Form” will include the following questions:
 - Today, or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following symptoms:
 1. Fever?
 - Temperature greater than 100.4?
 2. New or worsening cough?
 3. Shortness of breath or trouble breathing?
 4. Sore throat that is different from your seasonal allergies?
 5. Loss of smell or taste?
 6. Diarrhea or vomiting?
 7. Do you have a household member or close contact who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks?
- If an individual has positive findings on the screening form, they should stay home or be sent home immediately. If the student-athlete’s parents are not present, escort the student-athlete to a designated isolation room or an area away from the others. They need to immediately put a mask on.
 - Parents should be notified that they need to schedule a COVID-19 screening.
 - The student-athlete is not eligible to return until they present documentation from their healthcare provider stating they do not need to be tested and that their symptoms are not due to COVID-19.
- If an individual receives a positive COVID-19 diagnosis:
 - Notify the Coach, Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer immediately.
 - Athletic Director will notify the building principal and superintendent immediately.
 - Athletic Trainer will notify the public health authority immediately.
 - Immediate notification will ensure the timely and efficient contact tracing necessary to stop the spread of the disease.

- If an individual not wearing a mask is confirmed to have COVID-19, the following must occur:
 - All persons who have been in the presence of the diagnosed individual up to 48 hours before they started showing symptoms will be excluded from participation for fourteen (14) days.
 - If participating against another school, the athletic director will make immediate contact with the opposing schools' athletic director to notify them of the case for contact tracing purposes.
 - Exception to this fourteen (14) day exclusion could be made if all participants can be confirmed as practicing social distancing throughout the entire time exposed AND if the diagnosed individual was properly wearing a suitable mask.
 - These exceptions will only be made by our athletic trainers in direct consultation with our UPMC-WASD Team and with the approval of the athletic director, upon review of the professional medical staff opinion after consultation with the superintendent.
- Returning to Sport, Post COVID-19 Diagnosis with No or Only Mild Symptoms (not hospitalized)
 - The rationale behind the following guidelines is based on the myocardial injury, cardiac dysfunction and arrhythmias that have been in association with COVID-19.
 - Individuals must meet all the following criteria to return to sport:
 - At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. During this time, the athlete/coach should not participate in any exercise while monitoring clinical worsening of symptoms.
 - Symptoms have resolved, no fever (>100.4) for 72 hours without fever reducing medications, improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath).
 - The patient should be evaluated and provide a note for sport participation from a medical provider (MD, DO, PA or NP)
 - Individuals without a medical provider can contact their local public health agency.
 - Given the potential for COVID-19 to affect the heart, providers should utilize current sport pre-participation screening evaluations with a low threshold to obtain work-up (i.e. high sensitivity troponin, ECG, Echo) or referral to cardiology if concerned.
 - Medical providers should take into consideration the intensity level of sport participation and exercise to help guide their decision to pursue additional evaluation for student-athletes.
 - After returning, the athlete/coach should increase participation and exercise in a gradual and individualized process while monitoring for exercise fatigue or worsening symptoms. This individualized process should be generated as a joint decision between the medical provider, coach, parent and athletic trainer.
 - If symptoms worsen or new symptoms occur during the gradual return of play, such as, but not limited to chest pain, chest tightness, palpitations, lightheadedness, pre-syncope or syncope, the athlete/coach should be evaluated by a medical provider.

EDUCATION

Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- students should come dressed for activity
- Limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted Facility showers cannot be used
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
- No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer

Given the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changing guidelines from the CDC and the Governor's office, the WASD will allow the superintendent and the pandemic team to alter and adjust these plans to best fit the students and coaches in a safe, efficient manner.

APPENDIX

Williamsport Area School District
Athletic Department
Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases Including COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Center for Disease Control and others has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The WASD will take precautions based upon recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA to the extent practicable. The WASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

These Recommendations include but may not be limited to:

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. It may include a questionnaire and temperature check as needed.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, using hand sanitizer, cough in your elbow, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, no gum chewing, No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging)
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols
6. Request anyone who is sick to stay home
7. Follow applicable plans if a student or employee gets sick
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
9. Request athletes and require coaches to provide their own water bottle for hydration. Request that water bottles not be shared. Refill Stations and Water Fountains will NOT BE initially available, and availability will be determined as time progresses.
10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.

I understand that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may include a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist. I knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of others, and assume full responsibility for my participation. I willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by the WASD to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

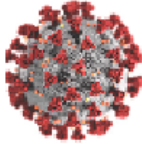
Sport: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

*Parents/Guardians may request a full copy of the WASD Resocialization of Sports Recommendations. Contact Sean McCann, Athletic Director at smccann@wasd.org

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



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cdc.gov/coronavirus

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.
- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

RESOURCES:

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,
“Schools Decision Tree”

Pennsylvania Department of Education

PK-12 Athletics Health & Safety Planning Document

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“What is Contact Tracing?”

“Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

**Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to
Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes and the Public**

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>